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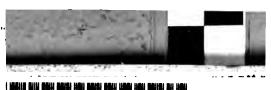
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BY THE LATE

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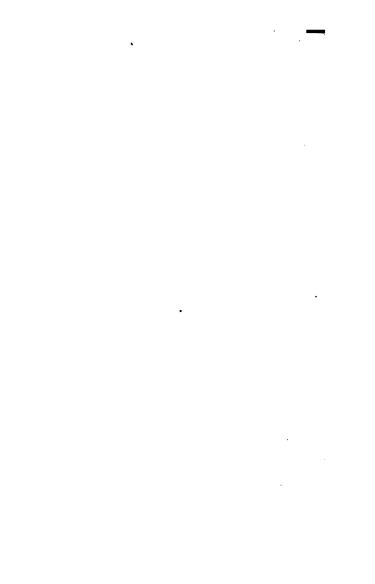
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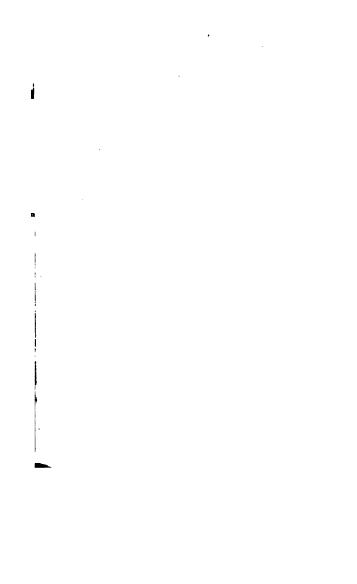






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THE

BETTER LAND.

By the

Late REV. JAMES SMITH, Cheltenham, Author of "Still Waters," &c.



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THE BETTER LAND.

THE BORDER LAND.

"The time of my departure is at hand."-2 TIM. iv. 6.

AGED Christian, thy day is far spent, thy journey is nearly ended. greatest part of the wilderness is behind thee. Thou hast travelled many a weary mile, and hast spent many a sorrowful But thou hast not much farther to go. Thou hast not many more days to spend here. Thou art just on the edge of the wilderness, on the borders of the promised land. Soon, very soon, thy Lord will send his messenger to call thee home. The year of release is just at hand. not, therefore, give way to fear. Do not hang down thy head like a bulrush, but look up, for thy redemption draweth nigh.

Let us talk together a little of the past, the present, and the future; and let us try and comfort one another with God's own precious words. ŀ

We have not much time left, let us not waste it. We have not far to go, let us not loiter. We are in the border country, let us expect visits from "THE BETTER LAND." We are hasting from danger and a country that is doomed; let us not look back. Every step now brings us sensibly nearer home. Every hour tells, and the last hour will soon be here.

Let us attend to the Apostle's admonition, "This I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away. But I would have you without carefulness."

Anxiety about temporal things does not become us now. The world is to us like an inn, where we lodge to-night, but shall leave it to-morrow.

"The world passeth away; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."—I John ii. 17.



THE REVIEW.

"O God, thou hast taught me from my youth."—Ps. lxxi. 17.

IN early life, God began to instruct us. He taught us the rigid requirements of his holy law, our need of a better righteousness than our own, the importance of an interest in Christ, and the necessity of personal holiness. Under his teaching we left the world, came to Jesus, embraced the atonement, found peace, and commenced walking with God. Many years have passed since that period, many times have we manifested the depravity of our hearts, through many trials and troubles we have been brought, but amidst all, our God has taught us.

Yes, he has taught us our own weakness, the vanity of the world, the insufficiency of earthly things, and the necessity of something superior to what we find here, to satisfy the cravings of our immortal minds. Daily has he taught us our need of Christ, and how to make use of him. He has taught us by his word.

by his servants, by his providence, and by his Spirit. And it is in consequence of his teaching that we now cleave to Jesus, prefer holiness to sin, heaven to earth, and the presence of God to everything beside.

Blessed, for ever blessed be God, for teaching us. For if he had not taught us, we had still been ignorant of ourselves, strangers to Jesus, and alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us, because of the natural blindness of our minds.

My soul, look back at the many Ebenezers thou hast set up, when helped in difficulty, when supplied in necessity, and when delivered out of trouble. Especially notice this, how thy God has taught thee thy need of his grace, the preciousness of Christ, and the value and veracity of his precious promises. O thou blessed God and Saviour, I praise, I bless thee, that thou hast taught me from my youth!

"Remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee."—Deut. viii. 2.



THE PETITION.

"Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth."—Ps. lxxi. 9.

READER, do you not often put up the same petition to your good and gracious God? What could be so dreadful, as to be cast off of God? What should we deprecate so much, as to be forsaken when our strength faileth? But the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make them his people.

No, my aged brother, my aged sister, the Lord will never cast thee off; he will never forsake thee. Yet, you may relieve your mind by thus praying, and please your God by thus pleading with him, provided you do not suspect his veracity, or doubt his faithfulness. Again the psalmist breathes out his soul, "Now also when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come." You see he is panting to be useful. He wanted

THE PETITION.

to bear witness for God, to testify to his power, faithfulness, and love.

Blessed be God, he never did forsake an old pilgrim yet! Blessed be God, he never did neglect an old servant yet! Many have deserved it; but he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. He is faithful to his word, and cannot lie. He is in one mind, and who can turn him? Let us abide at his throne, hang on his word, plead for his presence, and aim in some feeble way to glorify him; and then we may dismiss all our fears about his casting us off, or forsaking us. Then we may sing, if we have breath enough left, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea: The Lord of hosts is with us. the God of Jacob is our refuge."

"This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide, even unto death.—Ps. xlviii. 14.



THE PROSPECT.

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likenesa."—Ps. xvii. 15.

PRESENT circumstances may be trying. The Lord may hide his face, or withhold sensible comforts. Providence may appear to frown, and temporal things may run counter to our wishes. Corruption may work powerfully within, and innumerable sins may stare us in the face. Comparing ourselves with what God requires, we may be depressed; and comparing ourselves with what Jesus was, we may not be able to discover more than a very faint resemblance.

But let us look forward; it will not be always as it is now. There will be a change, and a glorious change, soon. Others may have easier circumstances, they may be strangers to the conflicts we endure, and we may wonder at their prosperity. But what pleases them would not satisfy us. Nor must we expect full satisfaction at present. If we are hungering and thirst-

ing after righteousness; if we are longing to be like Jesus; if we are pining and praying for the presence of God; there is a glorious prospect before us.

We shall see our God soon; we shall fall asleep for a time, it may be vexed, wearied, and disappointed; but we shall awake in the likeness of Jesus. Our present privileges are great, but our future prospects are unspeakably glorious. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

Like him! O glorious privilege! Awake up in his likeness! O delightful prospect! My poor, afflicted, tried, tempted, and aged friend, lift up thy downcast head; look from thy present circumstances, for thy redemption draweth nigh. You will soon put off this tabernacle, and be clothed upon with a house which is from heaven.

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life; in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."—Ps. xvi. 11.



THE PROMISE.

"Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs I will carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you."—Isa. xlvi. 4.

THE friends of your youth are gone, death or distance has stripped you of them. But your God says, "I am he;" I am he that formed you at first, as a creature; I am he that called you by my grace, into fellowship with my Son; I am he that gave you my word, that I would never leave you nor forsake you; and I am in the same mind still. I am he, there is no change in me. You have changed, I have not. You will change, but I shall not. "Even to your old age," I am the same; "even to hoar hairs will I carry you."

Your God will not only carry your burdens, but he will carry you. He laid you like a lamb in his bosom, when he called you by his grace; and he will carry you now you are old; he will never turn away from you from doing of you good, but will rejoice over you to do you good, with his whole heart, and with his whole

soul. He will bear with you, though you may sometimes feel fretful, peevish, and ungrateful. He will be with you amidst all your infirmities. He will carry you, not only to the Jordan, but over it. He has delivered you in six troubles, and in sever he will not forsake you.

You should look back to past deliver ances, and then face your present difficulty, saying with David, "The Lord who delivered me out of the mouth of the lion, and out of the mouth of the bear will deliver me also from this uncircumcised Philistine." Or with Paul, "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us." God's promise is your property. Take it, trust it, plead it, and expect it to be made good. Faithful is he that promised, who also will do it Even though you believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself.

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: but he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not reake it good."—Numb. xxiii. 19.



THE STRONG STAFF.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."— HEB. xiii. 8.

THE aged pilgrim, in going down the steep of time, often feels that he needs a strong staff on which to lean. Something that will support his weight, rest his weary limbs, help him along the road, and never give way under him. And what he needs is provided for him.

The immutability of Jesus is a strong staff indeed. Take it, my aged friend, look at it, lean on it, try it. Jesus, thy Saviour; the Christ, anointed to save thee, is ever the same.

Jesus Christ is the same now as he was when you first went to him, full of guilt, full of fears, and expecting he would reject your prayer. You remember how he pitied you, how graciously he smiled upon you, how freely he pardoned you, and how he pledged himself to you by his word. He is the same to-day. His pity is as tender. His heart is as full of love. His mercy is from everlasting to everlast-

ing. He has watched over you during the whole journey of life. He has borne with you all through the wilderness. He loves you at this moment, as much as he did when he died for you, or when he first called you by his grace.

There have been many changes in you, but there has been no change in him. Jesus, thy Jesus, resteth in his love. Having loved his own, that are in the world, he loveth them unto the end. His eye is upon thee at this moment, and his heart glows with infinite love to thee. He has some gracious purpose to answer by keeping thee here a little longer; it may be in weakness, in pain, or even in privation; but as soon as that purpose is accomplished, he will send for thee, and receive thee unto himself; that where he is, there you may be also.

Rejoice then in this, that amidst all the changes experienced within, or witnessed without thee, "JESUS CHRIST IS THE SAME, YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, AND FOR EVER."

"I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."—Mal. iii. 6.



THE EXPOSTULATION.

"O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"— MATT. xiv. 31.

MANY aged Christians give way to doubt. They yield to fear. They are more affected by their own feelings than they are by God's word. They judge more by what passes within them, than they do by what God has said to them. This casts them down, this disquiets them. Peter doubted, because he was on an unnatural element, and in new and trying circumstances. But Jesus reproves him for doubting, and he will reprove thee. "Wherefore dost thou doubt?" Ah, you say, "My sins are so many and so aggravated." But Jesus promises to pardon them. "My imperfections and infirmities are so great." But Jesus will clothe thee in his righteousness. "My prayers are so broken and so lifeless." But Jesus pleads for thee. "But I seem to be everything I ought not, and nothing at all that I ought." Jesus will completely save thee.

THE EXPOSTULATION.

You see your sins, because he has given you light; you feel your imperfections, because he has given you life; you are dissatisfied with yourself, because he has shewn you his beauty; you complain of your prayers, because his grace prompts you to desire perfection; you loathe yourself, because he has partly sanctified you, and implanted within you the desire to be exactly like himself.

Why do you doubt? Has he not promised that he will in no wise cast you out; that where sin abounds, his grace shall much more abound; that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved?

Now, you know you come to him daily in desire and simple prayer; you know you pant and plead that grace may reign in your heart; you know that you call upon his dear name. Doubt not, then.

"Why art thou east down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."—Ps. xliii. 5.



THE LESSON.

"I have learned by experience."-GEN. XXX. 27.

WE expect that our aged friends have learned some important lessons. Paul had learned in every state therewith to be content, and therefore he exhorted the Lord's people, "Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content."

It is a sad sight to see an aged Christian discontented. If God has arranged our lot—if he has promised us all that is necessary for life and godliness-if he has loved us with an everlasting love—if he has united us to Jesus-if he has redeemed us by the blood of his Son-if he has given us his HolySpirit—if he has pledged his word, never to leave us or forsake us —if he has assured us, that all things shall work together for our good—that as our day, so shall our strength be-if we have proved him faithful so many yearsif he has borne with our unlovely tempers, untoward manners, and many provocations—and if he is about shortly to introduce us to his kingdom and glory—surely, surely we ought to be contented.

"But our pains!" What are they to the pains of Jesus? What are they to what you deserve? "But our increasing infirmities!" The grace of Jesus will still be sufficient for thee. "But the road is so rough!" Never mind, the journey now is but short. "Yes, but you do not know what the trials of old age are!" Jesus knows, and he has made full provision for all the trials of old age, as well as for the trials of youth. "But-" Yes, yes, you have not learned to submit to God's wisdom, and to acquiesce in his will. You have not been thoroughly stripped and humbled. You do not realize that your desert is hell, and that everything short of everlasting burnings is a mercy. You have not learnt to count up your mercies, and to place them against your troubles and trials.

"Be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."—Heb. xiii. 5.



THE TESTIMONY.

"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken."—Ps. xxxvii. 25.

THEY are often tempted to believe that God will forsake them. Their sins of omission stare them in the face; their want of conformity to God's preceptive will, rises up before them; and their many sins of commission appear set in array against them. In consequence of this, they have feared that God would withdraw, and leave them entirely to themselves; and at times they have been ready to conclude that he has, so that they have cried. "Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercy?"

Did you never, my aged friend, feel inclined to make use of such language as this? Did your unbelief never lead you to fear? If a Christian, I know it has.

But you have lived long enough to see

THE TESTIMONY.

the fallacy of all this. You have never been forsaken vet. No, nor vou never will. You have known many believers, you have seen them in deep trials, in strange conflicts, in peculiar difficulties; but did you ever see them forsaken? You have perhaps thought at times, on account of the inconsistencies you have witnessed in them, that you should not wonder if they were. But what Jeremiah testified of Israel has been true of them; it is a most blessed, a most encouraging passage. "Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God the Lord of hosts, though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel."

As you have never been forsaken yourself,' and as you have never seen any of the Lord's people forsaken, however tried and tempted, it is for you to bear your testimony, in order that God may be glorified, and poor tried believers comforted.

"The Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people."—1 Samuel xii. 22.



THE PERSUASION.

"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."—2 Tim. i. 12.

PAUL knew Jesus, and so knew him, that he had no doubt of his willingness to take care of him, seeing he was able. It is a great thing to know Christ. To know who he is—the Son of God. What he is—the only Saviour. Where he is—at the right hand of God. What he has done—provided a full salvation. What he is doing—making intercession for us.

If we know Jesus, we shall commit our souls to him. We shall put ourselves into his hands, to be washed in his blood, clothed in his righteousness, sanctified by his Spirit, and to be kept by his power, through faith, unto perfect salvation.

My friend, you know Jesus, do you not? His name has been music in your ears, and his glorious work the only foundation of your hope. You have committed your soul into the hands of Jesus, have you not? Then you are safe, and

you should be at peace. Jesus never refuses to receive a soul that hastens to him, and he never fails to keep one that he receives. He has kept you in time past, you are a proof of his faithfulness at present, and he will keep you to the end. He is able to keep you, however weak, whatever you suffer, though Satan may thrust sore at you, that you may fall. He will keep you, if your eye is fixed on him, if your heart rests on his word, and you plead with him in simple prayer to do so.

Though you are weak, Jesus is strong. Though you are shaken with the wind, Jesus is stable as the solid rock. Though you have fears, Jesus is faithful. He will perfect that which concerneth you; his mercy endureth for ever, nor will he forsake the work of his own hands. Place your confidence in him, though you are a poor, sinful, unworthy creature, and he will keep you in perfect peace.

"Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."—Isai, xxvi. 4.



THE AUTUMN.

"They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to shew that the Lord is upright: he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him."—Ps. xcil. 14, 15.

LOOK at the aged disciple, the devout, the sincere, the humble follower of Jesus; he has entered life's autumn, and, like the aged palm in the east, with its coronet of rich ripe fruit, stands a witness of God's faithfulness, a proof of the power of grace, and an evidence of the excellency of real religion. The Spirit of God has long dwelt in his heart, the word has wrought effectually in him, and now the ripe fruits of the Spirit appear. There is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law."

But the Christian, when in an advanced state of grace, never admires his own fruit; he sees his defects and mourns over them, and like the full ears of ripe corn, his head is bowed down in humility and self-renunciation before God.

The young professor may rejoice in what he is, in what he has, or in what he has done; not so the aged saint; though laden with fruit, he rejoices only in Christ Jesus; if he glories, it is only in the Lord. In his life he has been useful to others, he has fruit in souls converted to God through his instrumentality, perhaps in children educated in the truth of God. in saints comforted, and backsliders restored. He has not lived in vain. He has left traces of usefulness behind him. But all is renounced when he looks into eternity; he says, "I am a sinner, saved by grace;' I owe everything to mercy; I ascribe everything to Jesus. This is my rejoicing, that my God is my Saviour, and my Saviour is my God. Christ in his person, Christ in his work, Christ in his glory, is the object of my faith, the subject of my meditation, and the theme of my song. In the mellow autumn of grace, CHRIST IS ALL, THE CREATURE NOTHING.

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."—Phil. i. 11.



THE ORNAMENT.

"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness."—Prov. xvi. 31.

CTRIVE not to hide your gray hairs, my venerable friend; they are no shame to thee, they are rather thy glory, if found in the way of righteousness. If we are found in that way, in which God justifies poor sinners by his grace, it is a choice mercy; and if we are found in that way, in which God glorifies himself by the service of poor sinners, it is not a less mercy. If we are in God's way, he brought us into it by his grace; and if we have been kept in that way, we have been kept in it by his grace. If we have grown gray in God's service, it is an honour to us. It reflects glory on him; he acquires a credit by our conduct and constancy. An aged saint, who sought the Lord in youth, who began to serve God almost before he began to serve the world, and who has persevered for forty or fifty years, is an honourable character.

"The beauty of old men," said Solo.

THE ORNAMENT.

mon, "is the gray head." And it is a beautiful sight to see the gray-headed Christian happy in God, and walking closely with God; to see him leaning on the faithful promise that has supported him so many years; and while daily endeavouring to lead sinners to Jesus, encouraging those who are seeking, comforting those who are cast down, and bringing forth from the stores of his own experience matter to stimulate and strengthen those who are ready to halt.

Reader, is thy head hoary? Has it acquired that colour in the service of my Master, Jesus? By some the gray head may be called the flag of death, by others it may be said to be frosted by age, but God styles it "a crown of glory." The gray head and the sanctified heart, the gray head and the useful life, are beautiful companions; but the gray head and the black heart, the gray head and a life spent in sin, are woful associates.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies."—Ps. ciii. 1,4.



THE ANTICIPATION.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."—Pa xxiii. 6.

IN looking back, we see that God has been true to his word and faithful to his promise. Not one thing hath failed, of all that the Lord our God hath promised; all is come to pass. His grace has been sufficient for us, his strength has been made perfect in our weakness. As our day, and we have had long days, dark days, sharp days, days that have made flesh and blood shake and tremble; but as our day so has our strength been.

Goodness and mercy began with us, they have accompanied us, and now they will not forsake us. We can testify, with the psalmist, that "the Lord is good, ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy, unto all them that call upon him." Can God's goodness fail? Impossible, for he is "abundant in goodness and truth." Can God's mercy fail? Impossible, for "the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to

everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness to children's children."

God's mercy found a channel in which to flow to poor sinners, in the person and work of Jesus; mercy flowed to us when we never sought it nor thought of it; and shall it fail us now? Oh no, from day to day, even until our dying day, we shall have to say, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not; they are new every morning, and great is his faithfulness."

Sooner may the water fail in the ocean, or light fail in the sun, than that the mercy of God toward his poor people should fail. His faithful word is, "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." And what is that? "The Lord God is a sun and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and after-ward receive me to glory."—Ps. Ixani. 24.



THE CONFIDENCE.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."—Ps. xxiii. 4.

THREE things conspire to give the aged Christian confidence—the word of God, the Spirit of God, and his past experience of God's faithfulness and love.

He has travelled with the Lord so long and so far, the word of God is so plain and so positive, and he has always proved it so true, that he feels there is no ground for fear. Death itself is but the shadow of what it was, since Jesus died; for he has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel.

The valley may be long, and dark, and damp; but Jesus has passed through it, and driven everything injurious from it. Besides which, he will be with us in it. He said to his servant John, "Fear not, I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death."

No one can open the door of death to a

believer but Jesus; and he always do it at the best moment, and in the be manner, for "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Nature always shrinks from death, but faith will look to Jesus as the resurre tion and the life, and welcome it; but even when faith is not strong enough to welcome it, it will look to the great Shepherd and expect that his rod will driv away all evil beasts, and that his sta will be lent to the soul to lean upon.

My aged friend, be not frightened at shadow, be not afraid to go where Jesu has gone before thee. Look out for h foot-prints, listen to hear his voice, be lieve, and you shall find his grace mad perfect in your weakness.

Take the promise, look at it, place con fidence in it, "I will never leave thee, will never, no never, no never forsak thee;" and then stand at the entrance of the valley and sing, "I will fear no evi for thou art with me."

"We are more than conquerors through him that loved us."—Rom. viii. 37.



THE JORDAN.

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee."—
ISA. xil. 10.

CANAAN was a very faint and imperfect type of heaven. It was better than the wilderness, yea, better than Egypt. But imperfect as it was, it was the object of desire and anticipation; how passionately Moses longed to go over Jordan and see it, but was denied. Jordan rolled between the desert and the promised land, that must be crossed, before this could be enjoyed. And death, like the Jordan, lies between us and heaven.

We must die. To die is unnatural. It is unpleasant. Yet the Christian has no reason to fear death. No Israelite was ever drowned in this Jordan. Jesus crossed it, and, like Joshua, placed twelve stones in the midst of it, on which the feet of his saints may rest. The precious promises are these stones.

Reader, are you afraid of death? As a believer in Jesus, it cannot hurt thee. He

THE JORDAN.

has taken away its sting. He has deprived it of all power to injure. The waters may be cold, and deep, and broad; but what then? He says, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." On the other side, the sun always shines, the plants are always in bloom, the atmosphere is always pure, the inhabitants are all happy.

Fear not death, it is a stingless serpent; the substance is gone, the shadow only is left. He that believeth in Jesus shall never die. Art thou afraid of dying? What! afraid of falling asleep after the toils, troubles, and sorrows of life's long day? Afraid of dying! What, when Jesus will stand by thy dying pillow, and the angels of his presence wait around to conduct thee to glory!

Place the hand of thy faith on the shoulder of the faithful Jesus, and hang thy whole weight on him. Go across the Jordan, as the spouse out of the wilderness, LEANING ON THY BELOVED.

"Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."—Rom. xiv. 8.



THE PREPARATION.

"Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."—MATT. Exiv. 44.

BE ready. Let all your worldly affairs be so settled, that you may comfortably leave them at any moment; and let your spiritual concerns be in such a state, that you may have nothing to do but bid friends farewell, and depart to be with Christ.

Daily confess sin over the blood of Christ, that it may be pardoned. Daily renounce thy own righteousness, and appropriate afresh the righteousness of Jesus. Daily seek the renewings of the Holy Spirit, that they may be shed on you abundantly. Daily commit body, soul, and spirit into the hands of Christ, to be saved by his grace, and to be used for his glory. Surrender everything to Jesus daily, without the least reserve; and endeavour to detach thyself as much as possible from everything here below.

Make the Bible thy companion, Jesus the constant object of thy faith, his perfect

THE PREPARATION.

work the grand subject of thy meditation, and his presence and glory thy chief desire. View God as a Father. Worship God as a Father. Constantly think of God as a Father. Dwell upon his love to thee, his pity for thee, his promises to thee, and his conferring the kingdom upon thee.

Hold communion with the Holy Spirit. Pray for Him. Pray to Him. Think of Him. Expect from Him. Look to heaven as God's home, as your home; and so live and walk with God, that you may feel that though by death you will change your place, you will not change your company.

You are leaving the world, therefore withdraw your thoughts, desires, and affections from it, as much as you can; you are going to heaven, therefore direct your thoughts, desires, and affections to it as much as possible; so will you be ready to depart whenever God calls you.

"Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."—Matth. xxiv. 42.



THE DESIRE.

"Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better."—Phil. i. 23.

READER, do you at all sympathise with Paul. Do you desire to leave the present scene of conflict, sorrow, and sin? Do you desire to depart from all that gratifies, and all that perplexes, that you may be with Christ!

What a delightful assurance it is to the believer, that, "absent from the body, he will be present with the Lord." with Christ, what does not this comprise? Surely one may say, "It is all my salvation and all my desire." To be with Christ, what does not this exclude? All sin, all sadness, all foes, all fears, all Well may Paul say it is "far better." Ah, how much better to be with Christ, than to be with the kindest relatives, the wisest friends, or in the most comfortable circumstances this world can furnish! To be with Christ, how far preferable to our present lot, where we are surrounded by foes, annoyed by tempta-

THE DESIRE.

tions, perplexed with disappointments, and made wretched by sins! To be with Christ, that is to be perfectly holy, perfectly happy, and for ever satisfied! Now, we mourn his absence, sigh for his presence, and would give all we possess at times for one hour's heart-melting communion with him; then, we shall be always with him, exactly like him, and for ever praising him.

Better, surely it is, infinitely better, to be where Jesus is, to be with Jesus, than to be here where there is so much sin, so many dangers, such briers and thorns, such disease and death.

My soul, seek such large communications of grace from God. such fellowship with the Holy Spirit, that thou mayest rise above all thy doubts, fears, carnality, and fleshly attachments; and say right heartily with the Apostle, "I have a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better;" yea, which is best of all.

"We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."—2 Cor. v. 8.



THE BETTER COUNTRY.

"They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."—Heb. xi. 13, 14.

CANAAN was the better country to the Jew, but heaven is the better country to the Christian. And truly it must be better than this; there are no thorns and briers there; there is neither death nor barren land there; there are no plagues or famines there; there are no wants or woes there; there is neither sin, disease, or death there.

In that country the atmosphere is serene and healthy, the views are clear and enchanting, the sun never goes down, for there is no night there. Ah, it is a better country, if we think of the holiness of its inhabitants, the plenitude of its stores, and the immutable security thrown around it. There is permanent joy, untiring activity, and the perpetual presence of God. There are no winds of error there; there are no sighs, groans, or sorrows there.

Aged Christian, this is the country thou hast been seeking, and thou art now come to the margin of it. Soon, very soon, thou wilt be called to take possession of it, and then thou wilt leave all that is painful behind thee. There are no weary limbs, no aching bones, no unstrung nerves, no long tedious nights there. No, no, all is health, ease, light, peace, and pleasure there.

It is, indeed, THE BETTER LAND, the land which the Lord our God hath espied for us, and which we shall soon pass over Jordan to possess it. Millions of our brethren, and some of our dear natural relatives, are there before us; others are on the road, and will follow if they do not overtake us; best of all, Jesus is there; it is his country, it is called EMMANUEL'S LAND. Home of Jesus! my heart sighs for thee. O to enter into that better country!

"If they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: but now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly."—Heb. xi. 15, 16.



THE DEPARTURE.

"The time of my departure is at hand."—2 TIM. iv. 6.

AGED believer, the time of thy departure will soon come; let not thy mind be exercised as to where thou shalt die, when thou shalt die, or how thou shalt die; these are all minor matters, and ought not to affect thee. Simply look at death as Jesus did, as we read, "Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father."

Why shouldst thou regret to leave a world like this, where sin, sorrow, pain, grief, disappointment, and anxiety meet thee at every turn? Or why be reluctant to go home, to go to thy Father? Dost thou not want to see his face? to enjoy his society? to be perfectly happy in his presence?

What did I hear thee say, "If I should be mistaken! If I should presume!" Mistaken! how can you be mistaken? Do you not renounce all hope in yourself, all dependance on your duties, and do

THE DEPARTURE.

you not trust on Christ alone? Have you not sought his face, relied on his word, trusted in his blood? Mistaken! why, if you are not right, what will make you so? Do you say, "My sins, my imperfections, my infirmities." Knowest thou not, that sins confessed, imperfections deplored, infirmities mourned over, if accompanied with faith in Jesus, never kept a soul out of heaven vet, and never will. "Presume," didst thou say! What, is it presumption to believe thy Saviour? Is it presumption to take God at his word, and give him credit for speaking truth? "Presumption!" It is presumption to doubt, when God has spoken so plainly. It is presumption to fear, when God has spoken so positively. It is presumption to want something else to assure thee, when God has said, "He that believeth hath everlasting life." And to you, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and THOU SHALT BE SAVED."

"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word."—Luke ii. 29.



THE REST.

"Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."—Rev. xiv. 13.

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THE better land is the land of rest for the weary, and of sweet repose to the troubled. Here, we are often tossed with tempests and not comforted, or toil on in weariness, discouragement, and sadness But "there remaineth a rest for the people of God," and a glorious rest it is. For a time, the poor body will rest in the grave, and the disembodied spirit will rest in the presence of Jesus.

My aged friend, thy labour in carrying thy cross has been wearying, thy labour for the cause of Jesus has been exhausting, and the inward conflict has added greatly to the trouble of thy spirit; but now thou shalt rest. Rest from all temptation; no more trials of faith, patience, and perseverance; no more solicitations to sin against God, grieve the Holy Spirit, and dishonour the cause dear to thy heart. No more painful afflictions, either personal or relative, of mind

or body. No more self-denying duties, nor crucifying of the old man, or mortifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts. All field labour, all outdoor work, is done. No more exposure to storms and tempests, to burning suns or pinching frosts; no more bleak winds nor pelting showers; "the winter is past," these things are over and gone.

Rest, O how sweet is rest to the weary! Rest, O how delightful the sound to the exhausted travelier! Rest, O how pleasant to the poor, tired, and afflicted believer!

No more wearisome nights are appointed for thee now. No long, almost endless, days of strong pain remain for thee now. No need now to wish for the wings of a dove, that thou mayest flee away and be at rest. Thou shalt rest, and rest for ever. Thy rest will be sweeter than an angel's, it will be sweet as the rest of Jesus, when he ascended from the tree of agony, from the field of blood.

"Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted."—Micah ii. 10.



THE INHERITANCE.

"An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed."—1 Par. 1. 4.

HEAVEN is called an inheritance, because it comes to us by heirship. Being born of the Spirit, we are all the children of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God; and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

What a glorious inheritance must this be. Meditate upon it, O my soul! It is incorruptible. It will endure for ever; no part of it is subject to decay. It is undefiled. No one can acquire it dishonestly; no one can soil it by sin. It fadeth not away. Its glory is ever new.

The plants on that inheritance know no winter. The sun never goes down. It is always in full perfection. The noblest production of God's power, it will stand out in bold relief from his other works, as the paragon of excellence. It is the portion of his children, the dwelling-place of the Lamb and his glorified bride. The reward given to Jesus, for his agonies



THE INHERITANCE.

and death. There the Lord God will dwell among his people. The tabernacle of God will be with men.

But description is impossible, for the powers of conception fail. "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, what God hath prepared for them that love him."

However great our sufferings here, and they may be exceedingly great, yet when the apostle compares them with this inheritance, he says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." What, O what, will that glory be! We must possess it to know it; we must be in it, adequately to speak or write of it.

Tried Christian, however poor now, however tried now, thou art heir to an eternal inheritance, which comprises the unsearchable riches of Christ; therefore, suffer patiently, and hope to the end!

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."—Col. i. 12.



THE CITY.

"God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city."—Hzs. xi. 16.

WONDROUS fact, that poor, depraved, and sinful as we are, God is not ashamed of us! By the faith which he has given us, we "come to the mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem," and consider this our home; as Paul says, "Jerusalem which is above is free, and she is the mother of us all." Jesus calls it, "the city of my God." John in vision saw "the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," to be the abode of the saints, and the dwelling-place of God.

Such a city, for costly materials, excellent workmanship, vast extent, perfect purity, and for the health and happiness of the inhabitants, was never known. No sin, no sorrow, no tears, no disease there; for "he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." On that city the glory of God rests for ever, and there the Lamb for eyer dwells. Here, we

shall find every accommodation, the saints will be connected in bonds of holy citizenship, they will enjoy perfect satisfaction, and be elevated to the highest honour. This city was founded before time; it is even now preparing for our reception; it will be stored with all that can gratify and delight us; and we shall possess and enjoy it for ever.

How wonderful, that poor, mean, and vile as we are, the infinitely great and glorious Jehovah should not be ashamed to be called our God; but that he should prepare for us a city, and such a city! How good, how gracious, how deep God's thoughts of us must have been! well may David say, "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them." Blessed be God for thinking of us, providing for us, and revealing to us such things; may we be daily preparing to pass over Jordan and possess them.

"Our conversation," on citizenship, "is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."—Phil. iii. 20.



THE HOME.

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"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."—Jour xiv. 1, 2.

HOW familiar with heaven! How well acquainted with that "BETTER LAND" must Jesus be! He calls it "MY FATHER'S HOUSE." Sweet view of our eternal residence this!

Dying is but going home. Going home to our Father. Going to our Father's house. And shall we fear this? Fear it! Can we do other than desire it? Do we not wish to go home and see our Father? We shall not be strangers there, so many of our brethren are gone home before us. And if they were not, how can we feel strange where Jesus is!

"I leave the world," said Jesus, "and go unto the Father." Such should be our language, in the prospect of death. O that, with child-like simplicity, we could receive into our minds the testimony of God's word! O that we could view death and heaven just as the Scriptures repre-

sent them! Where would our doubts and fears be then? What would become of our reluctance to leave the world then? Then, if we spake of departed relatives, who died in the faith of Jesus, we should use similar language to that of Judah before Joseph in reference to Benjamin, "The youngest is this day with our Father." We should no longer talk of losing friends or relatives. Oh no! we should speak of them as being in our Father's house, or of being with our Father.

Is God my Father? Yes, assuredly, if I believe in Jesus; for "ye are all the sons of God, by faith in Christ Jesus." Is God my Father? Unquestionably he is, if I love the Lord's people, for "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." My soul, I charge thee, in future to look to heaven, simply as thy Father's house!

"For we know, that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."—2 Cor. v. 1.



THE HABITATION.

"My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places."—Isa. xxxii. 18.

HERE many of the Lord's people have but a cottage, some a mere hovel, and some have been obliged to hide themselves from persecution in dens and caves of the earth; how many wants are felt, wishes indulged, and desires remain ungratified below. But in heaven, the poorest saint will have a mansion, a magnificent dwelling-place, in comparison with which the imperial palaces of earth will look poor and mean. The dignity of our nature, when raised to the exact resemblance of Jesus, will be consulted, and no wish for an alteration will ever arise, no desire for a change will ever be felt.

Look around thee, aged Christian, at thy inconveniences, at the many causes of discomfort; they will soon be left behind thee, and thou wilt inhabit a mansion prepared by Jesus. Look at all thy comforts, at the provision made to satisfy

THE HABITATION.

thee; and then look up, and remember you will soon be in a mansion; a mansion to which the most splendid of earthly palaces will bear no more resemblance, than the light of the glow-worm at evening does to the light of the sun at noon.

Blessed, thrice blessed Jesus, what love is thine! Not only to die for our sins, quicken our souls, and make us happy in time; but to go and prepare a mansion for us, a mansion in thy Father's house!

Believer, no more complain of thy lot; no more think thy trials heavy, or thy privations great; it is but a little while, and thy beloved Lord will call to thee, saying, "Come up hither, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." What joy is that! What tongue can tell, what heart can conceive, what the joy of the Lord is! But, however pure its nature, however exquisite its sweetness, however vast its degree, it will be ours, and ours very soon. Joy of Jesus! thou art my portion after death, and then for ever!

"He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation."—Ps. cvii. 7.



THE WHITE ROBES.

"I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and paims in their hands."—REV. vil. 9.

HERE we are often clad in sable, and called to mourn and weep; but "in the better land" we shall be clothed in white robes, and carry branches of palm in our hands. The white robe indicates acquittal from all charges. Here we have many things laid to our charge, Satan and our consciences often accuse us; but there we shall not only be justified from all things, but our very garments will witness that we are faultless before the throne of God.

The white robe indicates victory, and then we shall have gained the final victory over the great red dragon, that old serpent, the devil, who deceiveth the whole world. We shall have conquered every inbred lust and every fleshly principle. The victory will be complete and final. The shield will be hung up in the hall of glory, and the arms for ever

THE WHITE ROBES.

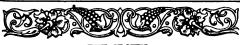
grounded at the feet of our all-conquering King. The last enemy, Death, will be destroyed then.

The white robes indicate purity too, and those who wear them are purified from every stain. They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus has purified and cleansed them with the washing of water by the word, and they are without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

The white robes are the wedding robes, and being clothed in them shews that the bride has made herself ready, and is waiting for the nuptial ceremony. In robes of snowy white, will Jesus wed his Church.

The white robes also are the emblem of praise, and praise will be the constant and pleasing employment of our souls for ever. The heart, like a crystal fountain, will send forth streams of gratitude, love, adoration, and praise before the throne of God and the Lamb for ever.

"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy."—Rev. iii. 4.



THE CROWN.

In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people."—Isa. xxviii. 5.

EVERYTHING "in the better land" is in harmony. If we have an inheritance, it contains a city; if a city, a mansion; if a mansion, white robes; and if white robes, a crown. Not a crown of myrtle, or laurel, or bay, like those awarded in the Grecian games; but a diadem, a gemmed crown. Their crown is called "a crown of righteousness;" because the righteousness of Jesus purchased it, and being graciously promised to the overcomer, God in righteousness confers it. It is called "a crown of life;" it will be the crown of an endless existence; that which sheds lustre and glory upon it. It is promised to all who patiently endure, and perseveringly overcome the temptations of the present state.

It is called also "a crown of glory;"—
"when the chief Shepherd shall appear,
ye shall receive a crown of glory that
fadeth not away." Men strive for a cor-

ruptible crown, but we an "incorrupti-Never were such crowns seen, as those which Jesus will place on the heads of his people; and they, as if they felt unworthy to wear them, will, in the ardour of their devotion, cast them at his feet. As if crowns of glory were alone fit to form a pavement for the feet of the Lamb to walk What will it be to wear a crown of righteousness, a crown of life, a crown of glory, an incorruptible crown? We must enjoy it, to know it; and blessed be God, through free and sovereign grace, we hope to finish the good fight, to endure temptations and to fill up the character assigned us, and then receive from the hands, the once nail-pierced hands of Jesus, our crown, and wear it to his praise for ever. circlets of righteousness, life, and glory, will for ever adorn those brows, which were not ashamed to confess Christ, and help forward his cause on earth.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. —James i. 12.



THE SONG.

"And they sung a new song, saying. Then art worthy: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."—Rev. v. 9.

THEY sung a new song before the throne. It is always new, because accompanied with new joys, arising from new thoughts and new views of Jesus. It is pleasant to sing of Jesus, and to sing to Jesus now; but what will it be above? Here, want of knowledge, or want of voice, or want of suitable feelings, often prevent our singing, or enjoying what we sing; but there the knowledge will be perfect, the voice will be sweet, and the heart will be always in tune.

Our recollections of the past, what we were, where we were, what we deserved, and what we were doomed to suffer; and what Jesus did for us, suffered for us, and conferred on us, will fill us with lively and everlasting gratitude. And then the presence of Jesus, the glories of Jesus, and the communications made by Jesus. will

keep that gratitude alive and vigorous for ever.

Aged Christian, Jesus loves to hear thy tremulous voice sing his praises now; do not give over singing, if thou canst raise a note, but continue to praise his dear and ever-blessed name. O that we praised him more! O that our hearts were always in tune to praise him! It is not so much the voice, as the heart that is inharmonious. But let us rejoice in this, that we have an eternity before us, in which we shall for ever praise and bless our Saviour's dear and adorable name. There, in the city of saints, in the mansion of glory, in our Father's house, in that "BEITER LAND," we shall all unite to praise the Father, for his free, sovereign, and glorious grace; the Son, for his precious blood, perfect righteousness, and prevalent intercession; and the Holy Spirit, for his quickening, comforting, and sanctifying operations.

"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."—Rev. i. 5, 6.



THE SERVICE.

"Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them."—REV. vii. 15.

IT will be temple-service in "THE BETTER LAND," becoming the dignity and purity of our priestly character. Here we serve God; but how imperfectly, how fitfully, how unbecoming his dignity and glory! Our weakness is so great, our interruptions are so many, and the sin that easily besets us is so powerful, that we feel ashamed of our best services.

In looking back upon life, now we are arrived at its evening, how little we have done for God, and how imperfect is all we have done. We feel ashamed of it; we are sorry we have done so little, and done that little so badly.

And now, compassed with infirmities, waiting for our dismission, what can we do? Satan whispers, "You are too old to be useful." But not so, we may do something still. We may speak for Jesus to those who visit us; we may write a line occasionally to those who do not,

with a view to honour his dear name.

—We can suffer patiently, in order to glorify Jesus. We may seek grace, that by our pains and weakness, by our prayers and praises, by our patience and perseverance, by our watching and waiting, we may glorify him. And soon, very soon, we shall be raised, where we shall serve him with gladness and great joy, without weariness or interruption, without infirmity or defect.

How delightful is the thought, that we shall still serve our God, that we shall still be employed by and for Jesus! Much of our happiness here has arisen from our service, for we have found that "in keeping his commandments there is a great reward;" and much of our happiness above will doubtless arise from our service. As to the nature of that service we are not informed, nor is it necessary for us to know; for we shall be willing to do anything, or be anything, for Jesus.

"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him."—Rev. xxii. 3.



THE OBJECT.

"Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off."-Isa. xxxiii. 17.

FEW things try the true Christian more than his want of the presence of Christ. If we can but realize that Jesus is with us, if his love is shed abroad in our hearts. and the light of his countenance shines upon us, we are happy and all is well. But often, very often, and for long seasons together, we have to walk by faith and not by sight. Believing when we do not see, when we do not feel, when we do not enjoy.

Jesus has won our love. He has taken away our hearts. So that, if we do not enjoy him, we are not satisfied with anything. Consequently, one of the great attractions of the better land is, that there we "shall see the King in his beauty;" "we shall see him as he is;" "and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

What will the first sight of Jesus be! What joy, what unutterable pleasure will

THE OBJECT.

it impart! Blessed be God, there we never be a last sight of him! Supposuch a thing: why it would silence tharps of angels, and stop the songs saints. Heaven would be clothed with sackcloth, and the only sound heard with its crystal walls would be weeping, waing, and indescribable sounds of woe.

To see Jesus for the last time! O te rible thought! But it cannot be; throug millions of ages we shall gaze on his beaties, and eternity will be occupied admiring, adoring, and enjoying his innite glories.

Yes, Jesus will be the object that we fix the eye, nourish the heart, and turn the tongue for ever. I shall see his whose head was crowned with thorn whose face was so marred more than an man's, whose heart was broken by extreme agony and pain. But how differenthen; crowned with glory, robed in light and infinitely happy.

"They shall see his face; and his name shall be their foreheads."—Rev. xxii. 4.



THE CONTRAST.

"I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

—Row. viii. 18.

LOOK at many of the Lord's people now; with sickly bodies, they groan, being burdened. With pressing wants, they sigh for relief. Tormented by inbred sin, they weep and long to be free. Harassed by Satan, they pant for deliverance. They hunger, they thirst, they suffer, they mourn, they pray, they doubt, they fear, they hope, they strive, they struggle, they pass through great tribulation. Every day is more or less a day of trial; and what with family troubles, business troubles, church troubles, and soul troubles, they are ready to exclaim, "I loathe it, I loathe it, I would not live alway."

When you have taken a full view of them as sufferers, as sojourners, as crossbearers, passing over the desert; then look up and see what and where they are now. They "are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his



THE CONTRAST.

temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

How is it possible for the contrast to be more complete, between the present and future state, of many of the Lord's poor tried people? Now, the eye of carnal reason would say, "They are of all men most miserable." Then, every one will acknowledge they are of all men most happy, most blessed! Look away then, my brother, from all that tries thee, and pains thee, and grieves thy heart; and look forward to the period when thou shalt be before God's throne, the companion of the Lamb and his glorified and happy company.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. iv. 17.



THE INVITATION.

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."—MATT. xxv. 34.

WHAT a glorious privilege will this be!
Blessed of his Father! Yes, all whom
the Father has blessed with divine instruction, with an interest in his own glorious
person, and with his Holy Spirit to prepare them for glory. Blessed? Yes, the
Father blessed them with all spiritual
blessings, in heavenly places in Christ
Jesus. To them the Father, in his good
pleasure, gave the kingdom; and they by
his word and ordinances, by his Spirit and
his providences, had been preparing for
the kingdom; and now Jesus, as the King
of kings and Lord of lords, invites them to
come and take possession of the kingdom.

It is a state, in which Jesus will reign, from which Satan will be expelled, into which sin, or sorrow, or suffering, can never enter. It is a state, in which holiness is perfect, happiness is complete, and everlasting honours are conferred. It is

a state in which we shall always see t King's face, enjoy the King's presen and rejoice in the King's favour. O he different to the present!

Wearied fellow-traveller, look forward and anticipate this glorious event. He glorious the person, how great the digning how sweet the voice, of him that give the invitation! How rich the grace, he free the love, how sovereign the mer that confers such honour, such happing on us! Well may we exclaim, "He raise up the poor out of the dust, and lift up the beggar from the dunghill, to them among princes, and to make the inherit the throne of glory."

Are you fearful, feeble, timid, and proto wander from the Lord? Fear not. Fe his hungry, clothe his naked, visit sick; in a word, show kindness to tried ones for his sake, and soon, perhavery soon, you will hear him say, "Con INHERIT THE KINGDOM."

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's g pleasure to give you the kingdom."—Luke xii. 32.



THE CONCLUSION.

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not sayed."—JER. vili. 20.

HITHERTO we have had the aged Christian for our companion; but this book may be read by an aged sinner, an old unbeliever. Ah, there are many such. some of whom are uttering these words.

"Harvest past!" What, did you sleep in harvest? "Summer ended!" What, have you squandered life away? "We are not saved!" What, have you neglected the one thing needful? Poor old man! Poor old woman! What folly you have been guilty of What a sin you have perpetrated. You have lived, only to insult God. You have lived, so as to deplore the course you have pursued to all eternity.

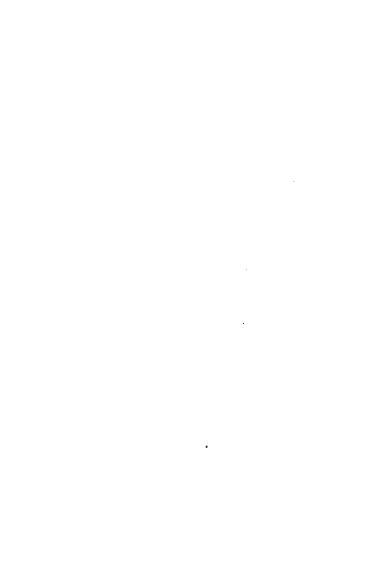
But, yet there is hope. If harvest is past, if summer is ended, life is not extinct, and while there is life there is hope. You may yet be saved. But there is not a moment to be lost. The blood of Jesus will wash out the sins of threescore years and ten. The righteousness of Jesus will

justify a sinner trembling on the bo of the grave. The Spirit of God can away the stony heart, and give the of flesh, even at the eleventh hour.

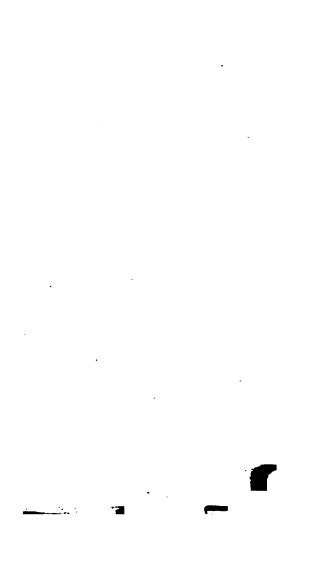
But immediate application is neces Cry mightily to God, that he would you his Holy Spirit. Receive into heart God's message of mercy. With thy dependence from all, and everytl within thee and without thee, and de on Christ alone.

Jesus still invites thee to come to O linger not! Jesus is yet willing t ceive you. O delay not one more Yield not to discouragement. Say "There is no hope." There is; then There is hope, there is mercy for the thou seekest it. Seek it at once. I and thou shalt find. Flee, flee, flee Jesus! This moment flee! For heavesake, for thy soul's sake, flee!

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shopened."—Luke xi. 9, 10.











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